

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 14th, 2005

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David R. Obey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing to urge you to increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to the highest level possible in the Labor, Health and Human Services Conference Agreement for fiscal year 2006. Currently, the House has funded LIHEAP at \$2.006 billion for regular state block grants and the Senate has funding the program at \$1.883 billion for regular state block grants and \$300 million for contingency funding. Both levels fall far short of the needs this coming winter and year.

The destruction caused by this year's hurricane season is rippling across our economy, generating significant increases in energy prices. With the winter just around the corner many cold-weather states are bracing for what could be the most expensive heating season in history. Based on the Energy Information Administration's most recent Short-Term Energy Outlook,

On average, households heating primarily with natural gas likely will spend \$306 (41 percent) more for fuel this winter than last winter. Households heating primarily with heating oil can expect to pay, on average, \$325 (27 percent) more this winter than last. Households heating primarily with propane can expect to pay, on average, \$230 (21 percent) more this winter than last... Should colder weather prevail, expenditures could be significantly higher.

For many low-income families, disabled individuals and senior citizens living on fixed incomes, these price increases will make home energy unaffordable.

Even prior to the damage this year's hurricane season caused our energy markets Congress recognized the vastly reduced purchasing power of this important program and increase the authorization from \$2 billion to \$5.1 billion in the newly enacted Energy Policy Act. We now find ourselves in an even more challenging situation. To ensure all our states are helped this program requires significantly more funding.

While we understand the budgetary constraints governing Conference negotiations, we encourage you to do whatever you can to fund this program at the highest level possible to expeditiously deliver this vital funding to the states before the arrival of severe winter weather. Funding LIHEAP at or below last

year's level (\$1.885 in regular state block grant funding and \$298 million for contingency funds) will prove perilously inadequate. Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Les Bradley
Robert E. N

Bobby Lush
Charles F. Bess

Tim Holden

John McElroy

John V. Hutchinson

Michael R. McNulty

Joseph Bradley
John Brown

Richard Shaw

Donald M. Payne

Pat Dyer

Bill Saul

Ch. Arlen Ruppertberger

Barbara Lee

Thaddeus McCotter

Julia Carson

Michael Sitzpatrick

Tom Linn

John A. LeBail

Nancy Thompson

Louise McShanahan

Bart Slupak

Chris Smith

Jose C. Llanos
~~Don't~~

Walter Delch
Ron Kind

Tammy Baldwin
~~Tommy~~
Phil Engle

John

Shirley Jackson Lee

Bob Meyer

Jim Oberstar

Mike

Ernie L. Enger

Dick Boudreau

Dan Mc

McDonnell

Jim Schatz

Jim Thorne

Benny Bank

Eddie Benner Johnson

Randy Kuehl

John W. Oliver

Jim Mc Dermott

Rush Holt

Mark H. Markel

Jim K. Korn

Frank Pullone, Jr.

Stephanie Haseeth

Tommy H. H. H. H.

W. C. H. H.

John Spratt

W. H. H. H.

John B. L. L.

Ellen Fauscher

H. H. H. H.

W. H. H. H.

William G. Schwartz

Stephen H. H.

Jack Strickland

W. H. H. H.

Carolyn McCarthy

Sandra Perry.

Dana DeBette

Ben Chandler

End Perry

Juan A. Davis

Edt Brans

W. J. Meek

Harry L. Lockerman

Maya B. Davis

Tom Osborne

David Scott

Steve Jones

Raul M. Hijalua

Ernest Samuel

Mrs Van Holler

Tom Allen

Billy McCallum

Edward J. Marking

Ben Card

Harry O. Wefman

Alvin H. Green

Al H. Hunt

Brian H. H. H.

John King

John Longest.
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Bill Basrell Jr

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